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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 7096

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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E.O. 12856: A/A

TAGS: PREL, PROP, UR, AF, IN

SUBJ: ALLEGED GHANDI QUOTE ON SOVIET PARTIAL

WITHDRAWAL FROM AFGHANISTAN

REF: KASUL 01469

1. FOLLOWING YOUR REQUEST (REFTEL), WE CHECKED CAREFULLY WHAT WAS PUBLISHED ON THE ITALIAN PRESS ON THE SUBJECT.

2. IN AN UNSIGNED ARTICLE FROM NEW DELHI NOVEMBER 5, CENTRIST "LA STAMPA" ONLY REPORTED ITALIAN PREMIER CRAXI'S PRESS CONFERENCE ON HIS MEETING WITH RAJIV GHANDI. GHANDI WAS NOT QUOTED, NOR WAS CRAXI. ACCORDING TO THE ARTICLE, CRAXI STATED THAT DURING THE TALKS THE AFGHANISTAN QUESTION WAS BROUGHT UP AND THAT "THE INDIAN PREMIER EXPRESSED THE OPINION THAT THE SOVIETS FIND THEMSELVES IN A TRAP FROM WHICH THEY WOULD LIKE TO GET AWAY."

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3. THE ARTICLE ALSO MENTIONED THE OTHER TOPICS OF CONVERSATION AS BEING: BILATERAL RELATIONS (BOTH PREMIERS AGREE THAT THESE SHOULD BE INCREASED); POST-REYKJAVIK (BOTH AGREE THAT PREMISES EXIST FOR A U.S./SOVIET AGREEMENT); PAKISTAN (GHANDI VOICED WORRY OVER NEWS FROM WASHINGTON THAT PAKISTAN CAN BUILD ITS OWN ATOMIC BOMB).

4. NO GHANDI INTERVIEWS WERE PUBLISHED HERE RECENTLY.

5. FOR YOUR INFORMATION, ITALIAN CENTRIST, TOP-CIRCULATION "CORRIERE DELLA SERA" NOVEMBER 4 CARRIED A STORY BY MOSCOW CORRESPONDENT SANDRO SCABELLO ON PEKING'S "PEOPLE'S DAILY'S" COMMENTS ON SOVIET TROOP WITHDRAWAL FROM AFGHANISTAN. SCABELLO QUOTED THE CHINESE NEWSPAPER AS: "IF FINDING THE WITHDRAWAL"

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR	
REVIEWED BY <u>EC</u>	DATE <u>7/27/87</u>
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